

State Representative Terry Goodin

District 66



Controlling College Tuition Costs

Pursuing a college education would become more affordable for Hoosiers, if legislation that I have authored becomes law during our current session.

House Bill 1288 would place certain limits on the ability of any Indiana college or university that receives state support to increase tuition rates for Hoosier students. That freeze would remain in effect the four consecutive years the student is in college.

I feel that if something isn't done to curb the increased costs of tuition that seem to come every year, then the dream of going to college and getting a degree will remain that: a dream. At a time when we are encouraging our young people of the advantages of advancing their education, we should do everything in our power to make it financially feasible for them to do so.

If the bill becomes law, starting with the 2005-06 academic year, the tuition charged a returning undergraduate student who is a resident of Indiana may not be increased annually by more than the percentage increase in the Indiana non-farm personal income for the preceding year.

The news that tuition rates are going up seems to be coming with depressing regularity each and every

year. As the superintendent of a school corporation in southern Indiana, it is sad to see so many students with bright prospects actually set aside going to college because they cannot afford it.

There must be some way to give them a chance to advance their education, therefore, I feel we need to make some demands upon our colleges and universities to recognize the financial burdens they might be placing on their students. A college education represents a partnership between the institution and the student, and it seems like Indiana's colleges and universities are pricing themselves out of a good deal with some of our best and brightest.

Indiana students returning to school for the 2003-04 academic year paid about 17 percent more in total costs. The average increase in tuition for first-time entry Indiana students was 14 percent. Indiana non-farm personal income grew by about 3.36 percent in the 2002 fiscal year, and 2.6 percent in the 2003 fiscal year. It is projected to grow by about 4.2 percent in the 2004 fiscal year and 5.1 percent in 2005. If enacted, my bill would restrict tuition increases to those percentages.

I believe the policies outlined in House Bill 1288 deserve to be a part of discussions about educational improvements in Indiana, and I intend to continue this debate throughout the weeks to come.

Read inside on how the **Earned Income Tax Credit** could provide refundable federal tax for Hoosier Families!

House Bills Introduced by Representative Goodin

In addition to the bill I have introduced to limit the increases in college tuition, I have also introduced the following bills in the House of Representatives during the current 2004 short legislative session:

House Bill 1285 will allow members of the Public Employees' Retirement Fund (PERF), before retirement, to withdraw voluntary contributions to the member's annuity savings account when the member demonstrates an immediate and great financial need and the withdrawal is necessary to satisfy the financial need. **House Bill 1286** would authorize eligible persons to receive a disabled veterans license plate for each vehicle registered to the person. **House Bill 1287** would permit a licensed commercial driver training school to conduct classroom training in a county outside the county in which the school is located. **House Bill 1070** creates the opportunity for the Center for Agricultural Science and Heritage to bid competitively for supplies needed to operate efficiently. **House Bill 1349** prevents inmates from filing frivolous lawsuits against the state or county where they are detained.



Rep. Goodin speaking from the floor of the Chamber of the House of Representatives.

Helping Hoosiers

Property Tax Update

The Indiana General Assembly has passed a series of reforms that help build on the tax restructuring that took place in 2002. The reforms contained in the package approved by the legislature will provide nearly \$500 million in property tax cuts for homes, businesses and farms.



The deadline to file for the homestead credit and other credits and deductions was extended. Counties will be able to offer installment payment plans to help taxpayers with larger bills, and penalties for late payments can be waived.

While these provisions will help

ease the burden on property taxpayers, I was disappointed that additional protections that were approved by the House were not included. The House reforms would have given homeowners and farmers a larger share of property tax relief and provided additional relief for senior citizens. The House plan would have created a "farmstead" deduction to protect agricultural land owners while helping owners of older homes who have been harmed by the reassessment.

While these provisions did not make it through the Senate, House Democrats continue to pursue these reforms in our current session. The bills outlining our proposals have been filed and are ready for consideration.

The General Assembly's actions to date have demonstrated a bipartisan understanding that more must be done to help taxpayers, particularly those who own homes and farms. We must continue to protect their interests throughout the 2004 session

Could you benefit from the Earned Income Tax Credit?

Did you realize that Indiana's working citizens have left more than \$50 million in unclaimed tax dollars? The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable federal income tax credit, based upon family size and earned income, for working individuals and families with low incomes.

The EITC could provide you with as much as \$4,204 if you are a working family with an income of \$34,692, or below, for the 2003 tax year.

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration estimates that as many as 84,000 Hoosiers qualify but are not claiming the credit. In addition to the tax savings for 2003, if you were eli-

gible but have not claimed the credit in the past you are able to back file for the credit for up to three years.

Most individuals who are eligible for the EITC credit do not claim it because they either haven't heard about EITC or do not know how to apply. There are several places you can contact to learn more about the EITC to see if you are eligible for this credit. These include:

The IRS hotline: 1-800-829-1040

The IRS website: www.irs.com

The Family and Social Services

Administration's EITC website:
www.in.gov/fssa/eitc

Economic Impact of the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

	Population	EITC Dollars (in millions)	Number of Filers Receiving EITC	Percent of County Population Receiving EITC	Average EITC Refund	Number of Filers That May Be Eligible and Not Receiving the EITC	Potential EITC Dollars
Indiana	6,080,458	\$569.8	361,359	5.9%	\$1,577	72,272	\$113,960,000
Clark County	96,472	\$10.2	6,458	6.7%	\$1,579	1,292	\$2,040,000
Jackson County	41,335	\$4.1	2,603	6.3%	\$1,575	521	\$820,000
Jennings County	27,554	\$304	2,128	7.7%	\$1,598	426	\$680,000
Scott County	22,960	\$3.2	2,025	8.8%	\$1,580	405	\$640,000

Stay in touch with

Representative Terry Goodin



Online

The official web site for the State of Indiana is www.in.gov. This is a good place to start if you are interested in information about Indiana and various government services. Additionally, I have a web site with information on my background, education and contact information. My site is at www.in.gov/H66. There you may also learn about bills, read newsletters and apply to become a page for a day. Read more about the page system inside this newsletter.

Email Updates

Would you like to receive email updates with news from the Statehouse? You are always encouraged to contact me directly via email, but I would also be happy to send you news from time to time about what is going on at the Statehouse. To receive updates, visit my website at www.in.gov/H66 and sign-up to have your name added to the list. It's a simple way to stay informed about the issues that impact our state and our district.

In Person

Sessions of the Indiana General Assembly are open to the public. You can observe the House of Representatives yourself, seeing our democratic system at work. No need to schedule an appointment—you're always welcome. Both the House and Senate chambers have visitors' galleries on the fourth floor from which you can view proceedings.

Whichever method you prefer, I hope that you will keep informed and stay involved.

Rep. Terry Goodin

Indiana House of Representatives
200 W. Washington Street
Indianapolis IN 46204
H66@in.gov

Prst Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Indiana House of
Representatives